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Friday, March 12, 1943

SUBJECT: "VICTORY DRESS REVIEW." Information from home economists of the U. S. Department of Agriculture.

--ooOoo--

Here's my suggestion for today--Take another good look in your attic or wherever it is that you keep the family's discarded clothing. If you look carefully there maybe a new spring suit in it for you--of better material than you can buy now. Or there may be a coat in it for a little girl in the family--or a suit for a little boy. In fact, there may even be a War Savings Bond hidden away there.

Of course, I'm speaking only of possibilities. You'll have to do a little figuring before all this comes to pass. And you'll have to do some careful cutting ....and a great deal of sewing. But you can make "new clothes from old." A lot of women are doing it nowdays. And they have War Saving Stamps and Bonds to prove it.

Just to show you what can be done along this line--I'll pass along to you a report of a Victory Dress Review held recently in the Nation's capital--what you might call a wartime style show. But let me quote directly from our Washington reporter who attended this show.

"There I was," she says, "sitting in the auditorium of the Department of Agriculture. Mrs. Roosevelt, the wife of the President of the United States was there. So was Mrs. Morgenthau, wife of the Secretary of the Treasury. And Mrs. Wickard, wife of the Secretary of Agriculture.

"But the center of attention was the stage. There--one after another--women ...teen-age girls.....little boys and little girls....walked up and modeled smart looking garments. There were women in their husbands' cast-off suits. There were children in clothing of material twice as old as they were themselves. In fact,

there was one 12-year-old there in a plaid skirt made from a piece of material woven in Scotland over 75 years ago.

"But if I hadn't been told, I wouldn't have guessed that these smart clothes were once cast-offs. To make most of these Victory clothes, the women had ripped up the old garments--washed the material and turned it. Then they had selected or worked out patterns that used the best part of the material. In a few dresses, unseen darns or well-planned style features covered up worn or torn places that had to be included in the new garment.

"For example, take one typical pair of models--a mother and her little girl. As they stood on the stage they looked much like any other well-dressed mother and daughter.

"The mother had on a blue-gray suit, softly tailored and with a pleated skirt. She wore a white blouse with it--and a blue felt hat that completed the costume. The little girl wore a trim oxford gray, doubled-breasted coat."

And here's the history of those two costumes as our reporter tells it.

"The mother's suit was made from one of her husband's. Her husband had had the suit seven years. Then she made it over for herself. It was good wool material. And in its third season as a suit for Mother it still held its shape and press.

"The white blouse she wore with this suit was made from an old shirt of her husband's. She remade it and added a touch of simple embroidery. Her hat was a three-year-old felt brought up-to-date by the magic of 12 cents worth of new ribbon.

"And Barbara, the little girl, had a coat that was exactly twice as old as she was. She was five. And her coat had been her father's new coat ten years before. When her father was through with the coat, Barbara's mother turned it and used the original lining. Presto--the trim new coat for Barbara."

But all of the clothes at the style show weren't made from old material, our

reporter goes on. And here she tells of some other garments that may give you an idea of ways to save money and material even if you havn't an attic full of old clothing. Our reporter continues--

"Several of the models shown were children's dresses made from remnants of new material picked up by smart shoppers at bargain prices. Another was a brand new coat made from new material and with new fur trim. But that coat bought ready made would have cost at least three times as much as the one made at home.

"Other models included a coat that had been an out-of-style size 40. But it appeared on the stage a size 14, very much 1943 in style and cut with a brand new gold colored lining. Another garment shown was a ski suit made from two discarded women's coats. Another was a dress made from a large all-silk scarf."

The Victory Fashion Review I have been telling you about was presented by the Department of Agriculture Clothes Clinic. This clinic was started shortly after Pearl Harbor by Mrs. M.L. Wilson, wife of the head of the Department of Agriculture's Extension Service. About thirty wives of Department of Agriculture workers make up this clinic. They hold regular meetings to stitch, mend, remodel, and remake.

The clinic showed some of their work at the Victory Fashion Review. There were garments there from the laboratories of the Bureau of Home Economics, U.S. Department of Agriculture, in Beltsville, Maryland. Incidentally, it was from the clothing specialists in that bureau that members of the Department of Agriculture Clothes Clinic got many of their ideas.

Also represented in the review were students of the University of Maryland, Maryland 4-H Club members, and women cooperating with Home Demonstration Agents in Maryland.

And that's the story of the Victory Fashion Review. And that's the reason I suggest now as I did at the beginning of the broadcast--Take another good look in the attic or wherever it is you keep discarded clothing.